

Beenham Primary School

Mount Pleasant, Beenham, Reading, Berkshire RG7 5NN

Inspection dates

13–14 September 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, assisted by other leaders and governors, has been effective in improving the quality of education since the last inspection. As a result, the school is now good and improving.
- Leaders carry out thorough checks on the quality of teaching and on pupils' progress. Pupils make faster progress in reading and writing than in mathematics. This is because reasoning and problem-solving are not yet fully secure in all classes.
- Phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) teaching is now a strength of the school. As a result, pupils make rapid gains in their reading.
- The curriculum is well planned so that pupils can use their literacy and numeracy skills when learning in other subjects.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. A range of effective strategies are in place to ensure that these pupils are well supported.
- Sometimes, groups such as the most able are not given hard enough work that challenges them to think in depth. Consequently, they do not always fulfil their potential.
- The governing body is effective. Governors are highly skilled and know the school well. They provide strong support and challenge to senior leaders. They have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to further improve the school.
- Pupils are well cared for and feel safe. They behave well and are keen to learn and work hard.
- Most parents feel that their children are happy, safe and well looked after. They are highly complimentary of the improvements in communication from the school since the last inspection.
- Children in the early years enjoy learning and make good progress. Adults provide a good range of activities both indoors and outside. The children play and learn well together.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching in mathematics is as consistently effective as it is in other subjects, by providing more effective opportunities for pupils to reason and solve problems, including in other subjects.
- Ensure that the most able pupils are challenged regularly to think hard, so that they make good progress by the end of key stage 2 from their above-average starting points.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders and governors, has worked with determination to improve the school since the last inspection. The academic and personal development of pupils and staff is at the centre of leaders' vision, 'valuing ourselves, valuing everybody.'
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school. The school's self-evaluation is thorough and detailed and accurately identifies the steps needed for improvement.
- The performance management system introduced by the headteacher after the previous inspection is used well to raise the standards of teaching and learning within the school. Leaders provide regular training for teachers, which is developed around the current needs of the school; staff appreciate the opportunities they have to improve their work.
- Leaders ensure that additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils makes a difference to their progress. As well as financing teaching assistants and school visits, the school uses the funding to subsidise the cost of using a taxi to bring pupils to school, and attendance at breakfast club. This creative use of funding has increased attendance and accelerated progress.
- Strong leadership of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that well-trained staff skilfully deliver suitable interventions. The progress of these pupils is closely monitored and interventions quickly changed if they are not having an immediate impact. As a result, these pupils are making strong progress from their starting points.
- The values-based curriculum is a strength of the school because it provides opportunities for pupils to gain a variety of experiences and develop both their academic and life skills. Themes such as 'scream machine' and 'I am warrior' bring together different subject areas including geography, history, and design technology. Pupils speak positively about how their work helps them to learn about the world.
- Leaders ensure that there is a wide range of extra-curricular activity on offer. Art, computer, cooking, book and 'glee' clubs are just a few examples of the many opportunities the pupils have to extend their interests. The pupils talk excitedly about the range of clubs on offer and say that they are always well attended.
- The leaders of both mathematics and English contribute well to school improvement. They lead training, scrutinise planning and observe learning. They have a clear understanding of what actions need to be taken to further develop these subjects.
- Primary physical education and sports funding is used well. Pupils can attend clubs such as judo, football, running and kwik-cricket. Older pupils are trained to become sports leaders and run playtime sport sessions; as a result, all children are actively involved in physical activities.
- Opportunities for pupils to be elected to the school council and to be appointed leaders give them first-hand experience of democracy. Fundamental British values are

promoted through the personal, social and health education curriculum and through vibrant displays around the school. Pupils are considerate and respectful of each other.

- The school receives good support and challenge from the school's adviser from the local authority. Activities such as work scrutiny, lesson observations and checks on planning have helped to secure improvement in both teaching and learning.
- The vast majority of parents are extremely positive about the school: 'Since the last inspection the school has come on leaps and bounds. There is now much more cohesion between parents and staff. The children love it here,' is just one of many similar comments made during the inspection.

Governance of the school

- Members of the governing body hold leaders to account for the quality of education and progress of the pupils, vigorously challenging any underperformance. The highly experienced chair of the governing body ensures that responsibilities are distributed well so that all statutory duties are met. All governors have received training in safeguarding, which includes protecting children from sexual exploitation as well as training in promoting fundamental British values.
- Governors have a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and what it needs to do to improve further. They share the headteacher's vision that pupils should leave the school as individuals who are ready to make sense of the world.
- Governors carefully monitor and review the use of additional funding, both for pupil premium and the sports grant. They check that these funds are having a positive effect on pupils' progress.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The single central record is compliant and all records relating to safeguarding are fully up to date.
- Pupils are taught how to be safe. They understand how to look after themselves in a variety of situations, such as when riding a bike or using the internet. Pupils care for one another and are confident that if they have a concern a member of staff will respond quickly and resolve it.
- All staff know the school's policies and internal procedures well. They receive regular training about safeguarding issues such as female genital mutilation and child sexual exploitation.
- Parents are confident that their children are safe. As one parent commented, 'I know my child is safe at this school: it is such a caring community.'

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good across the school. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning and recognise that they are making progress. Relationships are very strong between staff and pupils.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use resources well to make learning clear and interesting. In one class, pupils were highly motivated by the maps and artefacts they were given to probe the question, 'What were Iron Age people really like?' They responded confidently, sharing their thoughts and challenging each other's ideas.
- Teachers and teaching assistants ask good questions to probe the depth of pupils' learning. When relevant, teachers ask for further explanation, which deepens pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Teaching assistants are highly competent. They make valuable contributions to pupils' learning and deliver a range of interventions skilfully to support those pupils requiring extra support. The teaching of phonics is a strength and underpins the level of good progress most pupils make in reading. Pupils enjoy reading. They read with fluency and use their phonic knowledge well when working out unfamiliar words.
- Teaching in mathematics, while securely good, is not consistently as effective as it is in English. Work scrutiny and lesson observations show that mathematical problem-solving and reasoning are not fully embedded in teaching in some classes. The leadership team is aware that this is slowing down pupils' mathematical progress and has put steps in place to address the issue.
- On occasion, some work provided for most able pupils is not as challenging as it should be, which slows their rates of progress. Leaders have identified this aspect of teaching and learning as an area they are developing this year.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school's motto, 'valuing ourselves, valuing everybody', is at the centre of developing the pupil as a person. Pupils care about their school and each other. Several pupils commented on how their school was a community where everyone looks after one another. Pupils wear their uniform with pride.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their leadership skills through a range of activities such as being pupil leaders, school councillors and play leaders. This helps them to develop social skills and learn about democracy.
- Pupils are clear about the different kinds of bullying and how to keep themselves safe online. They say there used to be incidents of bullying but they are now a thing of the past. They know how to report bullying should it occur and are sure that adults would deal firmly with those involved.
- Discussions with leaders, parents and carers show that the school has strong links with

external agencies and actively supports families who need additional help.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils conduct themselves calmly around the school and in lessons. This contributes to an orderly school environment. Most react quickly to class teachers' instructions during lessons and focus fully on learning.
- Pupils play well together at breaktimes and say they enjoy being on the playground. Staff deal quickly with any incidents of over-boisterous play.
- All members of staff who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire say that pupils' behaviour is good. They feel well supported by leaders in managing behaviour and follow the school's clear procedures well.
- Following steps taken by school leaders, attendance is now at least in line with the average for all groups and persistent absence is below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Due to strong teaching, pupils typically make good progress. In 2017, according to early information, pupils' progress at the end of Year 6 was above that made by pupils nationally in reading, and broadly in line in writing. The proportion of pupils attaining scores at the expected standard in reading was above the national average. In mathematics, it was broadly in line with the average.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Following a dip in 2015, the proportion of pupils in Year 1 meeting the expected standard in the phonics screening check has risen dramatically so that it is now well above the national average. In 2017, all pupils in Year 1, including those who are disadvantaged, met the standard.
- The school's detailed assessment information and evidence in pupils' books show that disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities typically make good progress in a range of subjects, but slightly less than others nationally. The differences between the progress of these pupils and that of others nationally are diminishing.
- In 2016, the number of pupils in Year 2 who reached the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average. In 2017, standards rose, and the number was well above the national average.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make steady progress. However, work in books and lesson observations show that they are not challenged often enough, so they do not always fulfil their potential.
- Evidence in books shows that pupils make strong progress across the wide range of non-core subjects. The curriculum provides useful opportunities for pupils to apply skills learned in literacy and mathematics to other subject areas, for example using mathematics to estimate the distance between Iron Age settlements. These opportunities are less well developed in mathematics than in literacy.
- In 2016 and 2017, pupils' attainment in mathematics was at least in line with all pupils nationally. However, pupils made below-average progress from their typically high

starting points. Leaders' actions to address the issue means that progress is improving but more remains to be done to ensure that mathematical reasoning skills are developed across the school.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision is well led. Leaders observe teaching effectively, assist with the weekly planning, track children's progress data carefully and keep clear records. They have an accurate understanding of the progress that children make. Local authority moderation confirms that teachers' judgements about children's attainment are accurate. As a result, leaders have a clear view of the strengths and areas for development of early years.
- Most children enter the early years with knowledge and skills typical for their age. They make good progress from their starting points, including those who are disadvantaged. As a result, they are well prepared for Year 1. The most able, however, do not always make as much progress as they should in numeracy. Leaders are aware of this and have put in place plans to ensure that these children learn about and practise these skills more often so they can achieve above a good level of development.
- The proportion of children attaining their early learning goals has been at least in line with national averages for the past four years. In 2017, the proportion was well above the national average.
- At the time of the inspection, the children had only been in school for five days and were already listening carefully to each other, sharing and working collaboratively.
- Safeguarding procedures are robust. All staff in early years are fully qualified. They have all had paediatric first-aid training.
- Children's behaviour is good. They respond quickly to requests from adults and listen to instructions carefully. They enjoy talking to adults and will initiate conversations.
- Although early in the term, the early years teacher and her teaching assistant have developed a stimulating environment both inside and outdoors. Visual and written prompts help children so they can learn in different ways and develop ideas. For example, one girl used these prompts to find a safe place to leave her doll's clothes so that they would not get wet should it rain.
- Parents are very positive about the way teachers keep in touch with them. They particularly like the opportunity to email the class teacher as they know they will get a swift response. They are confident that their children are kept safe.

School details

Unique reference number	109802
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10032834

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	78
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Iain Davies
Headteachers	Sue Butcher
Telephone number	0118 9713397
Website	www.beenhamschool.org
Email address	office@beenham.w-berks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 June 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- From mid-September 2017, the school will be led jointly by two headteachers.
- This is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than in other schools nationally.
- The proportion of children receiving support for special educational needs is higher than in other schools nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainments and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children in early years are taught full time in a mixed Reception/Year 1 class.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons or part lessons in a range of subjects and attended one act of collective worship. Some of these were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with school staff, a representative from the local authority, members of the governing body, and parents and carers.
- The inspector scrutinised the school's work. He looked at a wide range of documentation including safeguarding arrangements, pupils' work in books and the school's procedures for getting an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses.
- Discussions took place with a group of pupils, as well as informal conversations with other pupils during lesson and at playtimes. The inspector listened to pupils read and talked to them about their favourite books.
- The inspector considered 24 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and 23 written comments via free-text.
- The inspector considered 10 responses by staff and nine by pupils to online questionnaires.

Inspection team

Brian Macdonald, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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